

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-21 (canceled)

22. (new) A strip coating installation with a vacuum chamber which has, between a rear wall and at least one removable closing plate, a casing with a flat top, wherein at least one guide roller and a coating roller with an axis (A), and at least one coating source, are positioned inside the vacuum chamber, wherein

the ends of the at least one guide roller and of the coating roller that face towards the closing plate are attached by supporting elements and with bearings to the top, and wherein the space in the vacuum chamber beneath the coating roller is kept free of supporting elements.

23. (new) A strip coating installation as in claim 22, wherein the at least one guide roller and the coating roller are mounted, at their ends that face away from the closing plate, on bearings on the rear wall.

24. (new) A strip coating installation as in claim 22, wherein the at least one guide roller and the coating roller are, at their ends that face away from the closing plate, mounted on bearings on supporting elements in front of the rear wall and held on the top.

25. (new) A strip coating installation as in claim 22, wherein the space beneath and at the side of the coating roller is divided by means of partitions into at least two chamber sections, and wherein the partitions have sealing elements at their ends that face towards the coating roller, the curvature of which elements is made to fit the radius of the coating roller in such a manner that curved sealing gaps are formed between the sealing elements and the coating roller.

26. (new) A strip coating installation as in claim 25, wherein each of the sealing elements is connected to its accompanying partition by an adjustment mechanism in such a manner that the sealing gaps can be adjusted to the smallest possible size in a radial direction.

27. (new) A strip coating installation as in claim 22, wherein, inside the vacuum chamber at least four chamber sections are formed on the circumference of the coating roller by means of partitions.

28. (new) A strip coating installation as in claim 22, wherein the two uppermost partitions enclose an angle of between 120 and 180 degrees downwards in relation to the axis (A).

29. (new) A strip coating installation as in claim 22, wherein the circumferential section of the casing that is beneath the two uppermost partitions is made in the shape of a part-cylinder.

30. (new) A strip coating installation as in claim 29, wherein in the chamber section that is above the two uppermost partitions, there are positioned a total of four guide rollers.

31. (new) A strip coating installation as in claim 22, wherein the partitions have, at their ends that face away from the rear wall, radial sealing strips against which the closing plate can be brought to rest.

32. (new) A strip coating installation as in claim 31, wherein the sealing strips have elastomeric sealing edges that run parallel to their radial centre lines, against which edges the closing plate can be brought to rest when vacuum chamber is closed.

33. (new) A strip coating installation as in claim 32, wherein the coating roller has an end face that faces towards the closing plate, in front of which face is positioned a fixed ring

sector which encloses the lower end of the supporting element for the coating roller around part of the circumference.

34. (new) A strip coating installation as in claim 22, wherein the coating roller is surrounded at its ends, inside the chamber sections), by strip-shaped screens that are curved cylindrically and coaxially, which screens enclose the said ends with narrow gaps and shield the coating roller from being coated on its surfaces that are not covered by the strip.

35. (new) A strip coating installation as in claim 34, wherein the front screen has an elastomeric sealing edge against which the closing plate can be brought to rest when the vacuum chamber is closed.

36. (new) A strip coating installation as in claim 34, wherein the ring sector extends over the circumference as far as its end edges inside the front screen.

37. (new) A strip coating installation as in claim 22, wherein the overall height of the installation, measured from the surface on which it is mounted, is a maximum of 2.5 meters.

38. (new) A strip coating installation as in claim 22, wherein the vacuum chamber has, on each of the two sides of the coating roller, a side chamber, in each of which are positioned a winding spindle for an off-winding roller and a take-up roller respectively, and accompanying guide rollers for the strip.

39. (new) A strip coating installation as in claim 32, wherein the side chambers are in the form of vacuum chambers and are linked to the chamber section of the vacuum chamber by means of slot-shaped gaps for the strip to pass through.

40. (new) A strip coating installation as in claim 22, wherein each of the chamber sections of the vacuum chamber and the side chambers is connected to a vacuum pump of its own.

41. (new) A strip coating installation as in claim 38, wherein the top surfaces of the side chambers are at least substantially positioned at the same height as the top of the vacuum chamber.